

In Stephen Sondheim's *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum*, Pseudolus, contemplating a flagon of wine, asks, "Was 1 a good year?" For the Council, Year 1, the first year of major State appropriation for the arts, was indeed a vintage year.

Year 2—which is what 1971-72 represents—was its equal. True, there was a significant drop in the amount of money appropriated for Council distribution—\$5 million, to be exact, or \$2.7 million if one discounts the previous year's special appropriation of \$2.3 million for the New York Public Library. Equally true, there was a significant growth in applications for financial assistance, which—again to be exact—jumped from 850 to 1,216. This awesome double threat to the funding process was faced with purpose and dedication by staff and Council alike. The consequences were that 805 organizations were supported by the Council in Year 2 compared to the 600 supported in Year 1.

Several questions had to be answered, of course, before the Council's funding plan for Year 2 could be brought into focus. The principal one was how to insure appropriate and necessary support to the many organizations "saved" by Council assistance in Year 1 and remain responsive to organizations applying for first-time assistance in Year 2. Balance and selectivity were recognized as the determining factors. Maintaining this balance between support of the established New York State arts resources and the newly applying ones required painstaking scrutiny and perception.

Although a total of 805 organizations received support from the Council under the Local Assistance Act for 1971-72, some received funds for several activities within different disciplines. The table below, which shows the number of organizations assisted by each Council program, therefore reflects interdisciplinary activity to the extent that 938 instances of assistance benefited 805 applicants. In this connection, it is also worth noting that the Special Programs support to arts organizations serving predominantly black and Puerto Rican audiences encompassed a wide range of disciplines. (The 116 Special Programs assistance grants went toward programs in the following disciplines: 1 in film and TV/media, 2 in literature, 14 in dance, 19 in music, 34 in theatre, 17 in the visual arts, and 29 in a combination of art forms.) These figures do not take into account the 573 organizations served by the Council-sponsored Touring Program, Exhibitions, Technical Assistance, Film Speakers Bureau, Visiting Artists, The Composer in Performance, Poets and Writers, and Isolated Communities Program. Nor do they include the numerous organizations represented among the estimated 3,500 inquiries handled by the Council's Information Center.

Year 2 was a vintage year.

Omar K. Lerman

Council program	instances of assistance
Arts Service Organizations	24
Film, TV/Media, Literature	110
Film 57; TV/Media 37; Literature	16
Performing Arts	482
Dance 121; Music 158; Theatre 130;	
Presenting Organizations 73	
Special Programs	116

Visual Arts
Museum Aid 125; Community Projects 81

206